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The Beach at Santa Barbara

A California Idyle

Being an appreciation of California
from the snow line of the Sierras to
the orange laden breezes of the
South : : : :

By
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Father Michael

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To a Generous Public

Whom I know will pardon this rather personal intrusion on time that is so valuable in this day and age, if the merits of my earnest tribute has nothing further to commend it than my zeal for California.

Maybe an occasional reader of the "South" will be made curious to know the wild beauties of the "North" and its splendid possibilities; perhaps those of Northern California will be given a stimulus to know the glories of Southern California and its delicate charm of climate—then shall I not have written in vain.

To Mr. Vernon of "The Santa Barbara Morning Press," the "Recreation Center," and the "Santa Barbara School of Arts," I am indebted for courtesies. My illustrations are the appreciated compliments of a busy capitalist, president of many of the State's great interests—contributions of a life-long friend always ready to "boost"; and lastly, those of a Franciscan Brother, whose lecture at Santa Barbara's Mission has been given ten thousand times—still did they find time to pay deference to my effort, the result to come to you through Mr. G. B. Barnett, U. S. M. C. son of a world's war, and my publisher.

Gratefully,

Jenny Sturtevant Macmillan.

November 15, 1921.

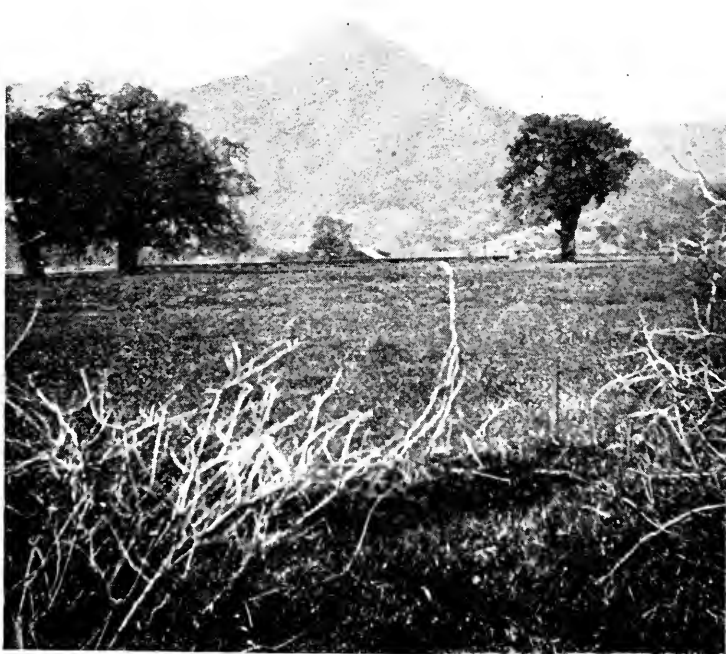


Sacred Garden, Santa Barbara Mission. Vesper Bells call the Monks to Worship and from the fields come the call of the Meadow Larks

Fair Daughter of California—that is you, Santa Barbara!

Years ago when the children of a Supreme Judge of Nevada were playing about the knees of their grandfather—genial old Governor Bradley—one kept saying: “Whisper in my ear, Grandpa, tell me, whom do you love best—say Grandpa, truly whom do you love best?” In concentration the Governor paid seemingly no attention to the wee blonde elf, yet after she bantered and coaxed, presently in desperation he pressed his lips to the eager childish ear and said: “I love you best, Honey, but you mustn’t tell the other children!” The story is quite in point, as we can fancy California may have whispered that to Santa Barbara often.

I am Nevada born, but when my good father, who is part of the history of both states, left Nevada we made one of California’s counties of the north, Mendocino, our home. Right here I want to say to you, kind reader, as Santa Barbara has taught me so much of your glorious south, and educated me extensively in the wonders of our splendid California, none will further your knowledge more of the north than dignified and queenly Mendocino. And while near, do not miss your “Switzerland of America,” Lake County; nor Humboldt, with her towering ferns, likewise her



The Dignified and Queenly Mendocino County

[*P a g e s i x*]

splendid Redwoods and her regal tiger lilies—and you shall have seen beauteous Sonoma and Marin on the way, and you will be determined to see Shasta in all her glory before your return. Indeed, to quote the late Miss Josephine Feusier, club woman and traveler, of San Francisco, “See your Yosemite and all the rest of California’s glories before you go east and to Europe, or else feel your insignificance by your ignorance of the fame that your own home surroundings have abroad.”

I was introduced to your charming section at Mrs. L. B. Page’s “Las Cruces Inn,” in that wonderful garden of Santa Barbara’s flowers, where your society folk journey for a luncheon, a dinner. From home they wrote me, “What flowers?” and I simply answered, “**Every flower** and **rose** that grows under the sun!”

And such beauties lure one everywhere about you, you all know them—I only hope you catch just a part of their glory as it calls and beckons at every turn. An “ad” in the “Morning Press,” the generous cooperation of the “Recreation Center”; or the kindly suggestion from the “Santa Barbara School of Arts”—brings me business opportunities—alas, alack! though the mocking bird, thrush and linnet give a classic concert” ’neath the sheltering arms of the rub-



Do Not Miss Your "Switzerland of America"--Lake County
[*P a g e e i g h t*]

ber tree you planted in 1872, so I make myself comfortable on the seat of its hospitable trunk for the concert. Often the program is lengthy; and after such music one naturally wants a little art. You can not leave a wonder program like that and not dream. So twice I have climbed the "Mesa" to the utmost point, to see the wonders from there; once in the softened lights of the fog, hill, valley, town, and sea, were a dream in misty color tones. Then again the fascination of it beckoned me once more, and I saw it in all the beauty of the sun's jeweled brilliancy.

Think you, gentle reader, that for a study of the applied arts a student of the "Normal School" could have a finer location than you have? A Santa Barbara Normal student begins the day's study to the music of your chimes, and a vista of inspirational beauty nowhere to be surpassed. The student day closes with the benediction of the mocking bird's carol, and the picture of his surroundings alive with soft whisperings of the glorious calling the profession offers.

But Business! My Work! We all must be busy in some way—ah yes. Well, like the Eden of old, someone must be blamed; so I will blame your exquisite beauty, Santa Barbara, if I have not concentrated as I should.



Russian River, Sonoma County

Surely my days here are truly characterized by "Polyanna" gladness. One of your many devotees said, "Did you go to the Ambassador site?" All was so beautiful there, and the grounds are still left as evidence." We that are from San Francisco, you know, in 1906 had so many ashes then, cherished hopes, homes and all that we treasured, that fire sites are only calculated to awaken sorrows and regrets. I have an aversion to cowards, moral or physical, so how glad I am over another of Santa Barbara's memory pictures! Thoughtfully and sadly I looked over the scene of destruction; then the memory of the notables that had entered there, the famous from everywhere seemed to echo an inspiration that made me run up the steps to the vanished "Portals of the Past," and turn quickly about for the view back of me. And that picture, fair Santa Barbara, may be as attractive with its vista of blue sea beyond the green lawn and through the palms somewhere else, but no spot on earth can be more beautiful. Instantly then I forgot the desolation of all that was back of me, in the dream of grandeur of the "New Ambassador" that shall equal, if it does not surpass, Naples or any other of the world's famous beauty haunts.

And you, sacred, historic, Mission of Santa Barbara —"the first shall be last and the last shall be first"—



Mt. Tamalpais — Marin County

all should kneel before your shrine in gratitude and appreciation, regardless of creed or dogma. How noiselessly and tenderly I tried to make each step I took in deference to the faithful that had trod earnestly and thoughtfully their paths of duty down through the century and more of your efforts. Beauteous Mission of Santa Barbara, for God, reverence and humanity. I was almost glad the others of the party found it only an incident, and hurry-scurried here and there and away. Feverently and sacredly I absorbed the outline of every wall and buttress, stone and pillar, flower and tree; I drank of the water of the fountain, likewise of the fragrance of the garden that marks the sleeping hordes of those who have made glorious Santa Barbara possible for resident and ye humble visitor. In the belfry I gently tapped the bells to listen for the sound that was a part of their historical echo of joy or sorrow down through time. We are proud of this splendid West, we who are a part of it in any way, so I did not try to stop the tears in memory of my grand parents' ministration to the remnant of the Donner Party," and of father's arrow-cut face, and proudly thought of their pioneer privation that helped blaze the trail for me to you, Santa Barbara Mission, as well as kindly Father Michael, whose verbal picture of you is so beautiful!



Portals to the Home of a Hospitable and Historical Family of Northern California

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